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TAGS: [KPAO](#) [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [PREL](#) [MEDIA](#) [REACTION](#)  
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION HADITHA INVESTIGATION; US  
POLICY SHIFT ON IRAN; ARGENTINE AMBASSADOR TO US ON  
BILATERAL RELATIONS 06/01/06; BUENOS AIRES

#### 1. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's stories include the current status of Haditha Investigation; the shift in US policy in Iran; and the opinion of Argentina's ambassador to the US on the bilateral relationship.

#### 2. OPINION PIECES AND KEY STORIES

"... Bush promises a punishment for the 24 civilian massacred in Iraq"

"Clarín", writes (06/01) "...George Bush promised to punish the guilty 'if laws were violated.' "Until now, little to nothing has come from the investigations. There are no photos of the incident either. But if they are able to verify the witnesses' denunciations, the Washington scandal will be equal to or worse than the one generated by the abuses perpetrated against the Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib.

"Bush seems to be worried about the events of Haditha, but has maintained that the investigation involves just a few soldiers, versus a great majority that behave honorably."

"Scandal in U.S. grows from the slaughter of 24 civilians in Iraq"

Daily-of-record "La Nación", writes (06/01/06), "The image of the United States in the North American press and in the rest of the world is still eroding.

"Yesterday, official sources in Washington said there is evidence that after an attack with explosives against marines (on November 19th, in which Miguel Terrazas died), there was an attack on Iraqis. Several women and children who lived near there died.

"The Third Battalion of the First Navy Infantry then reported that all the civilians had died alongside Terrazas in the attack.

"As a result of increasing public pressure, Bush broached the subject for the first time. He indicated that "he is disturbed" by the story going around that he is waiting for the results of two investigations in March: one on the deaths and another one on the cover-up. "If laws were broken there will be punishment", he promised.

"The United States now proposes to sit down and negotiate with Iran"

Leading "Clarín" writes (06/01/06), "In a true political twist, the U.S. announced yesterday that it has arranged to negotiate with Iran, if the government of Teheran suspends its nuclear enrichment program before-hand..."

"Until now, the U.S. has left the nuclear negotiations with Iran in the hands of the Europeans, the group known as UE3..."

"...Tony Blair convinced Bush of the need for U.S. intervention. Henry Kissinger, Bill Clinton's former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and the

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Republican Senator from Nebraska Chuck Hagel also pressured the White House to change its policy.

"The decision may cost Bush politically. The conservative right wing of the Republican Party is against all official contact with Tehran...it believes Iran is one of the regimes that most supports terrorists and that to negotiate with them is to accept the idea that it is all right to negotiate with terrorists.

"...According to Rice, Iran now has two options. Either accept to negotiate seriously or be sanctioned. When asked what type of sanctions, she said: political, economic or financial. And she said no options should be discarded, including using the military.

"Rice said that at this moment the White House is committed to the diplomatic route.

"Bordon and Wayne and the Bilateral Relation"

Independent "La Prensa", informs that Argentine ambassador to the U.S., Jose Bordon, talked yesterday with members of the External Relations Commission of the Senate, forecasting that there will be "no political change in bilateral relations when Ambassador Anthony Wayne replaces Lino Gutierrez, but that if any change takes place 'I will inform you'. Also, Bordon conveyed that to the U.S., Argentina's position on economic matters appears to have strong sustainability, recognition of the 'abilities of Argentina and Kirchner's government '. He added that last December he 'closed a stage of bilateral work' in which the priority was to obtain the support of the G-7 and the IMF regarding Argentina's debt. 'Today's objectives are foreign direct investment, market access, and mutual cooperation', said Bordon, for whom the purpose of the new stage is to achieve 'a balance of interests'. -

"Cronica" (p. 3) adds that for Bordon, the bilateral agenda is 'independent, respectful and positive' and that it was crucial in the bilateral relation for the cancellation of the debt with the IMF. Other important policies for good relations were the approval of the Non Proliferation Treaty, measures taken against terrorism and in favor of promoting democracy and human rights. When the radical Rodolfo Terragno asked him if Argentina 'was one of Washington's allies,' the ambassador answered 'neither yes, nor no'." Gutierrez